The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. XXXIV MAY, 1926 No. 12

Publication office, Concord, N. H. Monthly, except August: 50 cents a year. Single copy, 5 cents

Check, post-office order, or stamps should be sent to the Cheerful Letter Exchange, 16 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.

Entered as second-class matter at the post-office at Concord, N. H.
"Acceptance for mailing at the special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 17, 1922."

SERENITY OF SOUL

THERE is one gift I would wish for you and that is the gift of a true serenity of soul. For this serenity of soul is one of life's great benefactions. It brings a power of blessing others with it. It is something different from passivity or listlessness. It does not come with plenty, nor depart with want. It is a fruit of victory —victory over the world and over self; it is not a natural slant or tendency derived from bodily health and a happy disposition.

That true serenity of soul of which I am thinking is an active and constructive quality of soul; it is not quiescence or a yielding to despair. It has the eye of the eagle, looking down upon the earth, and not the blind withdrawal of the mole ready to burrow in its tunnel at the least alarm. It rarely comes to those who have drawn apart from life and declined life's responsibilities. It has its times of seclusion and retreat. It lends us quiet sleep at night. It is at home alike in the house of prayer with the great congregation of worshippers, and in the secret place of individual communion with God. But it is never separated from the conflicts and perplexities of its time by mere surrenders or withdrawals. It lends power to the thinking brain and laboring hands. It comes, as the serene and cloudless days so often come in our New England climate, after, and not before, the coming and destruction of the tempest.

Childhood is not the season for this matured serenity of heart. For the child is eager, questioning, acquisitive and quite unprepared to estimate the true values of what it discovers and desires. But, as with children, the peace of heart that makes the life serene grows out of personal confidence and affection. There is no true and lasting serenity of heart outside of personal relations and experiences of confidence and affection with God and with our brothers. Our Father in heaven, our neighbor on earth, as they make the field of action for what Christ declared to be the two great Commandments, so they also open up for every child of man the road that leads at last to happy living and full serenity of spirit. That highway leads us back to childlike faith and confidence again and discovers to us wells of sweet content. It is Christ's own gift to men. "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Here is the secret of our happy living. This serenity of heart which we sometimes recognize in others and account one of life's high attainments when we find it, is something given, and also something which must be individually attained and guarded when it is attained. It is given to our souls as seed is given to the farmer, that he may plant and cherish it. It is attained as the husbandman attains the harvest or the orchardist the fruit of a tree. Neither farmer nor orchardist put the life into the seed or tree. That was the gift; their part was care and nourishment. "But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." The life is in the seed; we give it opportunity of fruit-bearing. And one of the fruits of growth is this serenity of heart.

When, therefore, I see a worried, anxious-hearted and sometimes petulant and scolding Christian I do not jump to the conclusion that the seed of the Word has never been sown in his unhappy life. I am no judge of that. But I conclude that the seed sown has been neglected. It is out of character to show so many thorns and thistles of complaint. The garden of his soul is like that field I saw last summer where the corn had been planted but never cultivated, so that the corn was spindling and the weeds were flourishing. And that is Christ's own image of the unhappy soul: "He also that received seed

among the thorns is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and he becometh unfruitful." Unfruitful must the complaining Christian be in a thousand ways, but for my present purpose quite assuredly unfruitful in the harvest of peace and the fruits of peace in happy work which faith alone makes possible to those who trust in God.

Not for your own comfort only would I desire for you this rich gift which I have called serenity of soul. We need it for relief in times of trouble. I have nowhere found in Scripture or the experience of believers that God intends that we should find exemption from life's trials and responsibilities. This world is not a chamber of ease, but a place of overcoming. Our problem is to gain serenity of soul in the midst of troubles. It has been done by people no better than ourselves. It can be done by us if we can find the right companionship. And the only One who can bring us this serenity of heart is eager for our companionship. This life is not an experience in which God hides from us and dodges around a corner when we seek Him. It is an experience in which He seeks us out, to be companions of His purpose and sharers of His confidence and His own divine serenity of soul.

If, then, God both wants and needs us as companions of His work, what cause have we to worry? If He has planted in our hearts a seed of peace, why is it not our happy opportunity to nourish it? That was Saint Paul's notion of a form of righteousness through faith. He looked back to serene old Father Abraham, living in tents and looking after his flocks, and to all appearance a quite negligible feature of the life of the world. And the apostle said of him, and of us also, that we are to live by the message and assurance of faith—"Even as Abraham believed God and it was accounted unto Him for righteousness. Know, therefore, that they that are of faith the same are the sons of Abraham." If you have assurance that God has given you the gift of life in Him and made you companions of His work, why be victims of the little worries of the hour?

That is what Christ means and repeats over and over again in parable and preaching. And that is the true working secret for serenity of heart. Christ has an amazing patience for sin. He knows that it will work out to repentance or to punishment. But He makes no excuse, admits no apology for worry in the hearts of those who are God's children. Living with Him in God's companionship, our worry seems to Christ a denial or refusal of the promised love and care of God. Do you understand, my anxious, worrying and restless friend, what you are doing when you worry? Do you mean to raise the question whether God forgets? Do you doubt in your heart that He stands committed and means to keep His word? And if you question thus do you wonder why you seem to have so little private happiness or influence for good?

How welcome is serenity of heart in others when you come upon it in the dusty, wind-blown and perplexing hours of life! There are homes I enter whose peace is as a shelter from the storm. There are eyes I look into where courage and serenity look out to meet me. There are afflicted folks who have learned this secret of serenity and become like guiding lights of peace upon the way. I turn from clamor and the strife of tongues to find a reassurance for my faltering heart in the restful presence of these peace-communicating saints. How would you like to become one of them? The seeds of the life of peace are in your heart. It is for you to make it possible for God to bring them to perfection in your faith.

For it is we ourselves that hinder—we with our unfaith, our faltering courage and unfounded fears. God does as well by us as we consent to let Him do. But oh, how much better He is prepared to do when we let Him have His way with us in glad obedience and undaunted confidence! What wealth of heart-satisfaction and serenity of soul awaits us when we cease to wonder whether God is in the habit of keeping His own pledged word! If God is faithful, and we have linked our life to His, why should we not take for our motto in full serenity of faith: "In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me." For he that hath this armor of confidence may go forth to life's troubles in full serenity of soul and confident of overcoming by the aid of God.—*Saturday Night Thoughts.*

DOES THIS APPLY TO YOU?

With doubt and dismay you are smitten,
You think there's no chance for you, son;
Why, the best books haven't been written,
The best race hasn't been run.
The best score hasn't been made yet,
The best song hasn't been sung;
The best tune hasn't been played yet,
Cheer up, for the world is young.

The best verse hasn't been rhymed yet,
The best house hasn't been planned;
The highest peak hasn't been climbed yet,
The mightiest rivers aren't spanned.
Don't worry and fret, faint-hearted,
The chances have just begun.
For the best jobs haven't been started,
The best work hasn't been done.

Those who sacrifice conscience to gain power are weakening the engine to gain speed.

HEART'S GARDEN OF FLOWERS

OFT in my garden when evening is falling,
The sunset's long rays from out of the west
Throw halos of light on leaves and on flowers
And make their rare loveliness best.
When wandering there I am given to musing,
And sweet thoughts I cherish of friends true and fine;
Each fair blossom breathes of my best love unending
For you, ever dearest, Oh, Mother o' Mine.

The heliotrope whispers your "faith and devotion,"
With strength from on high to counsel aright;
The hyacinth white tells of "loveliness" always,
And reflects your sweet face with a glorious light.
The lily-of-valley breathes "unconscious sweetness";
While the verbena says that you oft "pray for me";
The dear yellow daisy speaks your "character's beauty,"
And pansies and violets your "thoughts' purity."

The lilies and daffodils, phlox and the larkspur,
All add their sweet message of comfort and cheer;
And whether the skies bring showers or sunshine,
They tell me that God's loving kindness is near.
When evening is falling or morning is dawning,
My garden, so sweet with the fragrance of flowers,
Is telling the story of God's love and goodness,
In giving to me such a friendship as ours.

I gather these blossoms so sweet and so fragrant
And add to them roses; the red, the white, too,
And Oh! that my arms could hold all of the flowers
I need to bear onward my message to you!
Your strength and your constancy, loyal devotion
In times when I'm wrong as well as when right,
Your faith and your spiritual great-hearted service,
All these make me love you with all of my might.

At morn on your birthday I send you these flowers
As plucked from my very heart's garden of love,
And the songs of the birds, the sweet birds in their bowers,
Are joining in sounding their praises above.
May ev'ry good thing in God's bountiful measure
Forever be yours till the end of all time.
There's nothing in Heaven or Earth I'm not wishing
For you, ever dearest, Oh, Mother o' Mine.

—*Florence B. Child.*

ORIGIN OF A STRANGE RHYME

SCHOLARS are always finding out that the most nonsensical rhymes have a respectable ancestry, and were, in their infancy, symbolic to the popular mind of some striking happenings in politics, warfare or social progress.

A correspondent of an English magazine writes as follows: "I was taught in my youth, some 60 years ago, that 'Sing a song for sixpence' arose as an occult jubilation over the first printing of the complete English Bible in the year 1535.

"The 'four-and-twenty blackbirds' stood for the alphabet. They were 'baked in a pie' when set up by the printer in 'pica' form.

"The 'opening' of the 'pie' was the publication of the volume, which, by its dedication in the preface to Henry VIII, 'was set before the King.'"

BRAVE, FAITHFUL, SUCCESSFUL

A LITTLE English girl, fourteen years old, is enrolled among the heroines of the British lighthouse service. Alone on a tiny island, a few weeks ago, with no food but a loaf of bread and a small piece of cake, for three nights she kept the light going in St. Helen's lighthouse on a perilous rock near the Isle of Wight, in the path of transatlantic liners. For more than forty-eight hours she remained at her post, without sleep, winding the clock apparatus that revolved the lantern. Her father and mother, who had gone ashore for supplies, were prevented by a storm from returning, and if the little girl had not risen to the occasion there might have been disaster in the fog.

The world still remembers Grace Darling, who in 1838 rescued several shipwrecked mariners in the Farne Islands, where her father was keeper of the light. The nation gave her $3,750 and a gold medal. There ought to be a similar reward for the plucky child of 1926 who proved by her long vigil that age has no monopoly of fidelity to duty.—*Clipped.*

BEFORE God's footstool to confess
A poor soul knelt, and bowed his head;
"I failed," he cried; the Master said:
"Thou didst thy best—that is success."

"THOU shalt be served thyself by every service which thou renderest."

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. Henry R. Austin, 100 Elm Ave., Wollaston, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Austin, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send those to the Book Club to be printed here.

SPECIAL NOTICES

It will greatly aid those who are sending books, magazines, cards, and so forth, if all our correspondents who send requests for their children will take pains to mention their names and ages. Lacking such information, one is likely to make mistakes; for a boy of twelve and a girl of seven are not usually interested in the same things.

When requesting books for the first time, correspondents should always give, as reference, the name and address of their clergyman.

When correspondents move to a new address, notice should be sent either to our headquarters, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., or to those persons who have been sending books and magazines.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word. We do not undertake to send correspondents money, clothing or household goods. Letters asking for that sort of assistance cannot receive attention. Letters not signed cannot be printed.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

Those who enjoy receiving books and magazines are asked to remember that they, in their turn, can give much pleasure if they will take pains to write to the persons who send such reading matter. In cases where no word of response goes back—not even to say that the books or magazines were received—senders may suppose the parcels were not welcome. Let us each do our share.

Only books of an instructive or wholesomely amusing character should be offered. Classics, educational works, and standard novels and magazines are always acceptable.

There is a large call for scraps of calico, gingham, and percale for patchwork.

OFFER

The Brookline First Parish Branch offers the following books. (Apply to Miss Martha Suter, 23 Dudley St., Brookline, Mass.):

Science in Everyday Life, by Buskirk.
Poems, by Cowper.
Nervousness, its causes and prevention, by Emerson.
Poems, by Ingelow.
Knickerbocker History of New York, by Irving.
Christian Year, by Keble.
Imitation of Christ, by Thomas à Kempis.
Around the World, by Phillips.
Poems, by Proctor.
Memoirs, Vol. 1, by Sherman.
Games of Patience, by Dick.

Stories

Harbor of Love, by Barbour.
Lady of Rome, by Crawford.
His Level Best, by Hale.
Scottish Chiefs, by Porter.
Golden Silence, by Williamson.

REQUESTS

1. I thank all the club for past favors and I am writing to see if anyone has any silk or wool rags. Will they please send them to me. I am making some Chenille rugs and I would be so glad of anything in silk or wool, no matter how old it is, if anyone has any to spare. Thanking you for all the cheer and comfort you have been to me in past, yours truly, (Mrs.) Bessie McFarland, Manchester, N. C.

2. I wish to thank every one who has been so kind to me. I hope they can still help me. My little seven-year-old boy got his heel mashed with a hay rake two weeks ago and can't walk a step yet. Will some of the *Cheerful Letter* friends please send me some cards and picture books. I am a widow. I have four children.

I also would be grateful for quilt pieces. Sincerely, Mrs. Belle Lackey, Ferrum, Va., R. F. D. 3.

3. Since my request was published, I have had a sad bereavement in the death of a dear daughter, and have neglected to answer some who so kindly remembered me with quilt pieces and reading matter. To all these I say "thank you and may God bless you all." Mrs. S. A. Pedigo, Vinton, Va.

4. I write again to thank all the *Cheerful Letter* friends for the nice things that were sent me. The children were pleased with the cards and nice picture books. I surely appreciate all the good reading that was sent to me. I am not able to buy any thing much and would enjoy crochet thread or any thing. I have two children, as I wrote before. My mother is with me now. She is not able to do any thing much. She is 62 years old. I am very poor and have a hard time. Mrs. W. A. Ham, Edison, N. C.

5. An old member of the *Cheerful Letter* family, Mrs. Sarah Gilbert of Atlantic City, Iowa, sent me some old numbers of the *Cheerful Letter* magazine and told me to write to you. I live way out here in Crook Co., Wyo. The long winter days and evenings are so lonely when we are all snowed in, and too cold to get outside. We have only five or six families in this neighborhood and the nearest family lives two miles away. We all are twenty-five miles from a town and no library nearer than the town. I have a little boy, David, aged three, and a little girl Margaret, one year old. I do hope some *Cheerful Letter* friend can send me some books and magazines, and some cards for the children. I shall pass on any reading matter I receive to my neighbors, all of whom are as eager to receive and read it as I am. Mrs. Blanch Thompson, Oshoto, Wyo.

6. Frances A. Spears of Marshville, N. C., R. 5, is old and feeble. She appeals to the *Cheerful Letter* friends to send reading matter to her sister and self.

7. It has been a long time since I have written to you all, so I am going to write and thank everyone who has remembered me in any way. I hope you will remember me again with good reading or anything that will cheer a widow of 63 years, living in a lonely and out-of-the-way place. Obligingly, Mrs. Candace Smith, Lawsonville, N. C., R. 1.

8. I am thanking my friends for the things they sent me. I have moved to Dodson, Va. My little boy, Eldren, is 8 years old the 13th of April. He would be glad to be remembered on his birthday. He has rheumatism. Mrs. Elsie Jamison, Dodson, Va.

9. Dear *Cheerful Letter* friends: I haven't heard from you in a long, long time. Will some one please send me some good story books for my two little boys, ages 9 and 10 years. They like to have me read to them. Aleene, age 15 years, would enjoy a few copies of the *Beacon*. We have no Sunday school at present and would like to be remembered. Thanking you for these favors, I am sincerely, Mrs. S. L. Turner, Dodson, Va., Box 13. For Reference, Rev. Posey L. Nolen, Bassett, Va.

10. Mrs. Georgia G. Massey of Stuart, Va., R. F. D. 5 hopes that some of the *Cheerful Letter* readers still remember her. She sends thanks for past favors and would appreciate story books for her three little boys, ages eight, six, and two.

11. I am a little girl 7 years of age. I would like to get picture books and cards of any kind. This is my first year in school and I like it fine. If any little girls my age or near it care to write me I would be glad to hear from them. Sincerely yours, Jeannette Spears, R. 5, Marshville, N. C.

12. I have written you a number of times, asking you to please send me a correspondent. As I am still here alone, and feeling so lonely this dark morning, I decided I would write you again, hoping to hear this time. It is snowing here right now. I ask to be remembered Easter. Bless all the *Cheerful Letter* friends. Your affectionate little friend, Sarah J. Traywick, Route 4, Marshville, N. C.

13. I want to thank you one and all for past favors. I have tried to answer every one and if I have failed I thank you just the same. I have a new baby boy at my home. He arrived January 25. I now have five boys and three girls, all living. I hope to be remembered in the future as I have in the past. So many thanks to one and all. Your kindness to me shall never be forgotten. Mrs. Caroline Wall, R. 1, Box 47, Wadesboro, N. C.

14. Mrs. Mary E. Foster of Broomer, N. C., R. 2, would greatly appreciate a book on geology or books on ancient history.

15. I am writing to thank the dear *Cheerful Letter* people for the reading they have sent me in the past, and hope they will continue sending it. I sure would be pleased to get the *Woman's World*, and my daughter, age 14, would be so glad of the *True Romance* and *True Story Magazine*. My son, age 12, would like to get *Jesse James* to read. Little scraps of crochet thread would be appreciated so much. My baby boy, 6 years old, would enjoy picture books. So now I hope to hear from some of the dear *Cheerful Letter* people. I am a widow. I am not able to buy things to read or work with

much. Yours truly, (Mrs.) C. E. Marshall, Foster Falls, Va.

16. Dear friends: I am a little girl 8 years old. I enjoy good reading. We are poor people. We live on rented land. There are eight of us in all. Mama is not stout. I hope some good friend will send me something. Tell all of your friends about me. I hope to hear from some one soon. Your friend, Ruth Brooks, Tuckerdale, N. C.

17. Mrs. Gusta Jones of Scolland, Ark., Box 43, writes that she is in need of good reading for her children, a little son and daughter, ages 13 and 11; that she is unable to keep them supplied.

18. I live several miles from the railroad station, and in the mountain, off the public road. I would be glad to get some good reading matter, good books or magazines or anything to employ my time. I am 50 years old, have been married 29 years. I have one boy at home. My other child is married. I would like to correspond with some one. We live on a small farm. Mrs. J. H. Blevins, Grassy Creek, N. C.

19. Mrs. C. W. Rose of Hayden Lake, Idaho writes saying, "The *Cheerful Letter* comes very regular, but I live too far away to avail myself of the free books. As a rule they are sent out before I can reach you with a letter. A book is a treasure out here. I find that I am weak in history. I would appreciate books on both ancient and modern history, also books on sociology and psychology." Readers will remember that Mrs. Rose is trying to prepare for college.

20. I am a poor woman. I have seven children and live a long ways from school and church. I would be glad to get some reading for me and my children. Many thanks. Hattie Brooks, Whitetap, Va., R. 2, Box 53.

21. I am writing to all the *Cheerful Letter* friends to thank you for the kindly attentions I have received from you. Words cannot express the appreciation for those things. It is nice for the widows and fatherless children to have friends that lend a helping hand. I believe the Lord will bless you people. My little children received their valentines, magazines and other gifts and they were so grateful for them. They had never had a valentine before. With gratitude to all, I remain your *Cheerful Letter* friend, Mrs. Joseph Griffin, Peachland, N. C., Rural Route 1.

22. I hope the good friends will remember me, as I am a widow now, left with four children, three boys, age 13, 11, 7, and one little girl crippled with Infantile Paralysis. As I feel very lonely, would be glad if the good ladies would send me any kind of cheer. I thank all who have sent things in the past and still hope to be remembered. (Mrs.) Flora Foley, R. 5, Stuart, Va.

23. Mrs. Minnie Wilkey of Dayton, Tenn., R. 4, writes to the *Cheerful Letter* saying that she would be glad of books and magazines. She has three little children, Clarence, 4 years old, Arnold 3, and a one-year-old baby, Helen. For them she asks for pictures and cards. She would enjoy having a correspondent.

24. I have received many things from the *Cheerful Letter* in the past and wish to express my thanks for the papers and books I received. I should very much enjoy the book, *Feet of Clay* by M. Tuttle, *At the Foot of the Rainbow* by Gene Stratton Porter, *Wings of the Morning* by Louis Tracy, and *Bringing up Father* for myself, and *Trailin'* by Max Brand and *The Golden Snare* and *Valley of Silent Men* by James Oliver Curwood, for my older sister. My father is very anxious to receive a book on music issued about 1889 or somewhere around there called Kimbel's instruction book for organ. Thanking you for all past favors received and in advance for future ones, I am sincerely yours, Elsie Harrington, Swatara, Minn.

25. I am the mother of five children and but little to go upon. I would be so glad for any kind of reading for the children and quilt scraps for myself. (Mrs.) S. M. Hart, Greencove, Va.

26. I am a young woman living in the country, I would appreciate embroidery and crochet thread. I would like to correspond with someone. (Mrs.) Calvin Kiker, Peachland, N. C., R. 1.

27. Mrs. C. B. Merrick of Methuen, Mass. asks if someone would kindly send her the *Psychology* magazine? She would be very grateful for this.

28. As it has been a long time since I've written to the *Cheerful Letter*, thought I would write again. I want to thank all the friends who have sent me reading in the past. I get very lonely sometimes; would like to receive flower seeds, as I am a great lover of flowers. Address Miss Dovie E. Hall, Elamsville, Va., Box 28.

29. Mrs. T. V. Davis of Preston, Va., is anxious to receive a copy of Forster's *Bible Stories* and hopes someone of the *Cheerful Letter* friends can send it to her.

30. I wish to thank everyone that remembered me any way. I haven't heard from anyone for some time; would be glad to get some good magazines. My two little girls, ages 9 and 11, would appreciate some pictures and cards. I would be glad of some quilt pieces and cotton

embroidery thread. Best wishes to all the *Cheerful Letter* friends. (Mrs.) Ellen Washington, Endicott, Va.

31. I am writing to the *Cheerful Letter* asking for reading matter for my children. I have seven children, five girls and two boys. My husband is not able to do anything, as he has lung trouble, and my nine-year-old daughter is sick all the time. All my children ought to be in school, but I cannot manage to send but two this winter. Times are hard for us poor people. I should be so glad to receive reading matter for the children and pictures for the little sick girl. (Mrs.) L. A. Gibson, Norwood, N. C., Star Route.

32. I would be so thankful for a correspondent. We live out west, and it is very thinly settled and I have no way to go very much and we get very lonesome these cold winter days. We live on a farm. I have two little boys, aged 4 and 2 years. We would certainly appreciate some good reading. Oh, I will be so glad to hear from some of the *Cheerful Letter* friends. (Mrs.) Mable Key Kendall, Ford City, Texas, R. 1, Box 50.

33. I am a young married woman with two small children. I get very lonely, as I live a long ways from my neighbors. My husband works away from home most of the time. I would be glad to receive reading, to help pass away the lonely hours. The children would like picture books or cards. I hope I haven't asked for too much. Mrs. Daisy McAlexander, Elamsville, Va.

34. Mrs. Bessie Rhodes of Crumpler, N. C., is a lonely widow with four small children to care for. She would appreciate good reading matter, crochet thread or anything to bring her good cheer.

35. It is with pleasure that I will attempt to write a few lines to the *Cheerful Letter*. It has been so long since I have heard from any of the *Cheerful Letter* friends. I enjoyed their letters very much. I got lots of joy and comfort out of them, and ask that they write to me again, if it is not asking too much. I have only two children, two boys. One is 7 years old and the other 2 years old. We are a very poor family, and my husband has not been able to work but very little in the last two years, and it surely is making it hard for us to live, but the good Lord knows best. I would like to get letters from some of the good friends. I will answer all that will send stamps. I remain a friend to you all. Mrs. G. A. Bonner, Big Spring, Tenn., R. F. D. 2.

36. I would appreciate some good reading as I am very lonely at times. I would like to have the *Modern Priscilla* or any good reading matter. I have five boys ranging in ages from 4 to 20 years and one girl, but she isn't with me now. I would like a few picture books or cards for the four-year-old boy. Mrs. R. D. Gillispie, Pedlar Mills, Va.

37. I would be glad for any kind of reading matter for the children whose names and ages are as follows: Willard, 7; Miles, 6; Glenry, 15 months. Mrs. J. O. Powers, Grassy Creek, N. C., R. 2, Box 104.

38. Our home and almost all of our furniture was lost by fire December 28. I lost all of my magazines and good books. I would appreciate a Bible and any good books you may have. I would like to thank the lady who sends me *Good Housekeeping* as I lost her address. Sincerely yours, Mrs. D. G. Shaw, Kerr, N. C.

39. Mrs. Myra Chambliss, Triplet, Va., would be glad to correspond with some one.

40. My name was entered in the *Cheerful Letter* in 1922 asking for reading matter, and I received some good books and magazines which I enjoyed very much. Especially *Good Housekeeping* and *Ladies' Home Journal*, but have not received them since last summer. As I am alone with my little children much of the time while my husband is away at work I would appreciate it if some one could send me these magazines or other good second-hand reading matter for myself and children, whose ages are 10, 6, and 2 years. With best wishes to all the *Cheerful Letter* friends, Mrs. Lucy T. Stone, Sanville, Va., R. F. D. 1.

41. Once more I come to the *Cheerful Letter* for a little help. I would like a small Bible with large print. Any kind of reading matter will be appreciated. My husband has been down for some time with fever and a nervous breakdown and is beginning to sit up a little. It has sure been hard on us. Anything to brighten a sad heart would be appreciated. Mrs. Etta Miller, Seven Mile Ford, Va.

42. Mrs. Lina Eastridge, Clifton, N. C., would appreciate magazines for herself and crippled daughter.

43. I am the only girl at home and get very lonesome as my mother is sick and I didn't get to finish school and my father is at work all week. I will be glad if someone will send me some books or magazines to read. Anything will be appreciated. I try to go to Sunday school every Sunday that mother is able for me to go. Bessie Saunders, Tellico Plains, Tenn.

Change of address

Mrs. S. M. Lively lives now in Copeland, Ark.

NOTICE: *No* attention will be paid to applications written in lead pencil, unsigned applications, or those without a reference.

THE ROBIN'S INN

A BIG maple sheltered the house of the widow Vaughn. After the noon hour of a summer day its tide of shadow began flowing fathoms deep over house and garden to the near field, where finally it joined the great flood of night. The maple was indeed a robin's inn at some crossing of the invisible roads of the air. Its green dome towered high above and fell to the gable end of the little house. Its deep and leafy thatch hid every timber of its frame save the rough column. Its trunk was the main beam, each limb a corridor, each tier of limbs a floor, and branch rose above branch like steps in a stairway.

Up and down the high dome of the maple were a thousand balconies overlooking the meadow. From its highest tier, of a summer morning the notes of the bobolink came rushing off his lyre, and farther down the golden robin sounded his piccolo. But, chiefly, it was the home and refuge of the familiar red-breasted robin.

The inn had its ancient customs. Each young bird, leaving his cradle, climbed in his own stairway till he came out upon a balcony and got a first timid look at field and sky. There he might try his wings and keep in the world he knew by using bill and claw on the lower tiers.

At dawn the great hall of the maple rang with music, for every lodger paid his score with song. Therein it was ever cool, and clean, and shady, though the sun were hot. Its every nook and cranny was often swept and dusted by the wind. Its branches leading up and outward to the green wall were as innumerable stairways. Each separate home was out on rocking beams, with its own flicker of sky-light overhead.

For a time at dusk there was a continual flutter of weary wings at the lower entrance, a good-night twitter, and a sound of tiny feet climbing the stairways in that gloomy hall. At last, there was a moment of gossip and then silence on every floor. There seemed to be a night-watch in the lower hall, and if any green young bird were late and noisy going up to his home, he got a shaking and probably lost a few feathers from the nape of his neck. Long before daybreak those hungry, half-clad little people of the nests began to worry and crowd their mothers. At first, the old birds tried to quiet them with caressing movements, and had, at last, to hold their places with bill and claw. As light came, an old cock peered about him, stretched his wings, climbed a stairway, and blew his trumpet on the outer wall. The robin's day had begun.

Mid-autumn, when its people shivered and found fault and talked of moving, the maple tried to please them with new and brighter colors—gold, with the warmth of summer in its look; scarlet, suggesting love and the June roses. Soon it stood bare and deserted. Then what was there in the creak-and-whisper chorus of the old tree for one listening in the night? Belike it might be many things, according to the ear, but was it not often something to make one think of that solemn message: "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble"?

They that lived in that small house under the trees knew little of all that passed in the big world. Trumpet blasts of fame, thunder of rise and downfall, came faintly to them. There the delights of art and luxury were unknown. Yet those simple folk were acquainted with pleasure and even with thrilling and impressive incidents. Field and garden teemed with eventful life and hard by was the great city of the woods.—*Irving Bacheller.*

HOME

THE prince rides up to the palace gates
And his eyes with tears are dim,
For he thinks of the beggar maiden sweet
Who may never wed with him.
For home is where the heart is,
In dwelling great or small,
And there's many a splendid palace
That's never a home at all.

The yeoman comes to his little cot
With a song when day is done,
For his dearie is standing in the door
And his children to meet him run.
For his home is where the heart is,
In dwelling great or small,
And there's many a stately mansion
That's never a home at all.

Could I but live with my own sweetheart
In a hut with a sanded floor,
I'd be richer far than a loveless man
With fame and a golden store.
For home is where the heart is,
In dwelling great or small,
And a cottage lighted by lovelight
Is the dearest home of all.

A SUNSHINY disposition is a gift from God. There are many whose minds are filled with gloomy thoughts, and who look on the dark side of everything. Such people cannot radiate sunshine until they fill their minds with brighter, happier thoughts. This is not an easy matter, for when gloomy thoughts receive encouragement to remain, it is hard to displace them with more cheerful ones. . . . If we go persistently to work to cultivate a sunshiny disposition, our efforts will at length be rewarded, and we shall be the possessors of a brightness and cheeriness scarcely distinguishable from that bestowed as a natural gift.

WHEN THEY WERE NEW

First jury 970.
Pins made 1450.
Needles used 1545.
Matches made 1829.
First cast-iron 1544.
First newspaper 1494.
Coal used as fuel in 1834.
Surnames used in 1162.
Lead pencils used 1594.
Window glass used 694.
First gold coin B. C. 206.
Tobacco introduced 1582.
First steam railroad 1830.
First postage stamp 1840.
Kerosene introduced 1826.
Electric light invented 1874.
Iron found in America 1815.
First insurance, marine, 533.
First wheeled carriages 1559.
First American express 1821.
Musical notes introduced 1338.
Latin ceased to be spoken 539.
Bible translated into Saxon 637.
Gunpowder used by the Chinese 80.
First illuminating gas in 1792.
Bible translated into Gothic 872.
Photographs first introduced 1802.
Old Testament finished B. C. 430.
Emancipation Proclamation 1863.
Paper made by Chinese B. C. 220.
Bible translated into English 1534.

IN THE PINE GROVES

Here is a quiet place where one may dream
The hours away and be content. It shines
With many a shadow spot and golden gleam
Under the murmur of those priestly pines.
About the level russet-matted floor,
Each like a star in his appointed station,
The sole-flowered scented pyrolas by the score
Stand with heads drooped in fragrant meditation.
The pensive thrush, the hermit of the wood,
Dreams far within, and piping at his leisure,—
Tells to the hills the forest's inmost mood
Of memory and its solitary pleasure.
Earth only and sun are here, and shadow and trees
And thoughts that are eternal even as these.

—*Archibald Lampman.*

ANCIENT INDIAN "FLUTE"

An Indian musical instrument made of a string of acorns is the latest discovery to be made by J. P. Harrington, ethnologist of the Smithsonian Institute, in his fruitful researches among the ninety- and hundred-year-old elders of the Southern California Indian tribes. "It consists of a string of acorns, carefully tuned according to their size," says Mr. Harrington in a report to Dr. J. Walter Fewkes, chief of the Bureau of Ethnology. "One end of the string is held in the hand and each acorn in turn is held in the mouth between the teeth. As the string is swung and pulled taut by the other hand, the acorn between the teeth vibrates with a clear tone, and by alternating the acorns a tune is played as pretty as flute music." He is bringing back to the Smithsonian a specimen of this new discovery among Indian musical instruments, but refuses to promise to play it correctly. "It is harder to play than the open-end Indian flutes," he says, "and I have always had to draw the line at them."

Another interesting discovery of a musical nature made by Mr. Harrington is the process of Indian flute manufacture out of elder wood. "The Indians cut the elder stick green in the early spring and let it lie with the leaves on it for a week or so, that the 'leaves might draw the sap out.' That prevented it from cracking. Only four holes were bored, the method being to scrape the wall of the flute where the holes were to be bored very thin and then to press a glowing twig of the desired diameter against the wall. The holes were placed at random so that each flute had a different scale. Some players knew as many as thirty tunes. Many of these were peculiarly flute melodies and were never sung." According to Mr. Harrington these Indians worshipped the elder as the tree of music and myths existed among them of magical elder trees that gave forth notes at night.

Mr. Harrington's researches among the California Indians are of particular importance because they are rescuing from the brink of the grave information which in a year or two more would have been lost forever to the world. Due to the amalgamation of the younger Indians in thought and habits and blood with the white man, all that remains of the old tribal history, music, myths and language of these California Indians is in the memories of a few old men and women who must soon die. Mr. Harrington has already spent eight months of intensive labor in interviewing, photographing and taking about for purposes of identification of places prominent in their old tribal history, these survivors of a departed generation. Among the treasures he has rescued from oblivion is the myth of the water monster of the great peak of Santa Rosa in Riverside County. The many springs of the peak are the doors to the home of the water monster. It is he who makes the strange bellowing noises that are heard especially at night about the peak.

Thanks to old Manuel Tuertes of Santa Rosa Rancheria, Mr. Harrington was able to discover the two great rocks "that are what

remain of the twin culture heroes who fixed up the world at the start of things. At a mound of rock that projects out into the desert are these great heads, that of the elder brother above and that of the younger brother below. They are looking northwest. The profiles are so genuinely Indian that it is hard to think the rocks are natural and were not touched up by the hand of some prehistoric medicine man. Lieutenant Wheeler mentions these heads in his report way back in the '50's, but no one has ever found out where they are located until the present expedition." At Campo, Mr. Harrington got pictures of the oldest Indian man, already past a hundred and deaf and blind. Manuel Chuparosa supplied him with the Indian creation myth. According to Manuel, the world started in the form of an egg. Out of the egg all things grew and the eldest born of the persons of the world were the Twin Gods. The younger brother opened his eyes in the water as he was being born and his eyes became blurred and his hands webbed. He originated the evil and disease in the world and is a kind of satan.—*Boston Transcript.*

SMALL GARDEN PAYS

Tiny Plot Will Produce Well if Planned Right

Any one owning a lot that has at least six feet square of free space can enjoy a vegetable garden.

Even in the back yard of a city residence, a well-kept vegetable garden can be almost as attractive as a flower garden—provided it is kept free from weeds, and is not allowed to go untended.

For the spring, radishes, lettuce and green onions seem to be universal favorites. These should be planted in rows about six inches apart, so as to allow space for hoeing. Do not plant the seed all at once, but allow a week's time between each planting. This will give a longer season for all three vegetables.

Do not forget to leave space for some parsley. A small row of this will keep you supplied all summer.

Tomatoes, beets, carrots, spinach, string beans and peas are among the vegetables that are most popular for the home garden. Do not attempt to plant sweet corn, or other vegetables that require a large amount of space.

It is well to ask your local seedman or nurseryman how to fertilize and prepare the soil before planting, as different soils require different treatment.

The advice you don't like is often the best.

WITH OUR HOME-KEEPERS

Favorite Receipts

Eggs with Green Peas.—Two slices bread cut thick (about 3 inches), 6 hard boiled eggs, 1 cup canned green peas, 4 tablespoons butter, 4 tablespoons flour, 2 cups milk, ½ lemon, salt and pepper to taste.

Cut bread in narrow strips and stand on end around baking dish (after frying in butter until brown). Melt butter, add flour and add milk and pour over eggs; top with peas; season, salt, pepper or lemon juice. Heat and serve.

* * *

Cheese Supper Dish.—A receipt that never grows old, as it is so well liked.

Spread bread with butter, sprinkle with chopped cheese, making as many layers as needed in a baking pan. Pour over a custard, using a pint of milk to 2 eggs and salt to taste. Bake in a moderate oven until the custard is set. Serve hot.

* * *

Old English Date Pie.—Beat 2 eggs, add ¾ of a cup of sugar, ½ teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon of cinnamon, ¼ teaspoon each, nutmeg, allspice and cloves, 1 cup of sour cream, 1 tablespoon fine bread crumbs, 1 cup of dates cut into pieces, ½ cup cocoanut. The cocoanut is used to sprinkle over the top of the pie. Bake in one crust.

* * *

Handy Hints

To remove a ring or stain left after using a cleaning fluid, let it dry; then hold it over the steam of a kettle until it vanishes.

To remove scorch from linen, rub the scorched part with a cut onion; then soak in cold water.

For dishcloths, sew two little salt bags together. They will last longer than ordinary ones.

Marks on paint, made by scratching matches, can be removed by rubbing with a cut lemon.

When slices of cold ham are to be used for sandwiches, they should be shaved rather than sliced.

To heat dishes quickly, don't put them in a hot oven, but let them lie in hot water for a minute or two.

In cooking fruit it takes nearly twice as much sugar to sweeten if added before cooking. Cook first, then sweeten to taste.

A bright little girl, aged 4, and her brother, aged 6, were spending the night with their aunt. When bedtime came, the aunt asked them how they said their prayers. The little boy answered, "Sometimes I say them to muddie's knees and sometimes to the side of the bed."

"And how about you, little girl?" asked the aunt.

"Oh, I don't need to pray. I sleep with daddy."

A PAGE FOR THE CHILDREN

VISITING IN CHINA

THIS is a story about a little girl named Li-Ti who lives in Shanghai, one of the most important cities of China. Her father is editor of a Chinese newspaper.

Perhaps you did not know that there were Chinese newspapers? Yet the first in the world, so far as is known, was published in China. It appeared during the Ming dynasty (A. D. 1368–1644). Although it had mostly to do with what was going on in the palace of the Emperor, the Peking Gazette kept the people informed on matters of which they would otherwise have known nothing. Of course there is no emperor in Peking today, for China, once known as the "Flowery Kingdom," has become a republic.

One day Li-Ti received an invitation to go and stay with her grandmother. Li-Ti did not wish to go because she had never seen her grandmother who lived in another part of China, but Chinese children seldom question the plans made for them by their elders. Although she would have preferred to stay with her parents in Shanghai, Li-Ti said nothing when her father remarked to her mother that it would be good for her to see her grandmother in her beautiful home among the mountains.

LI-TI SETS OUT

When Li-Ti's father left her at the railroad terminal, she was put into the care of a trusted amah and from there continued her travels in a chair slung between two long poles carried by the bearers.

The path up the mountain side was long and steep but Li-Ti saw so much to interest her that she never noticed the distance. The men with their great umbrella-like hats and straw capes bringing vegetables down to the big houses at the foot of the mountain. The duck-man in his flat-bottomed boat on the canal which wound its way through the valley below. She watched him push his way through the water with a long bamboo pole, every now and then giving a queer shrill whistle which the ducks seemed to understand for they appeared to be doing just what he wished.

As he whistled, stragglers from the banks came swimming toward the boat and as Li-Ti watched she saw him send the whole flock out across the fields where they seemed to be looking for insects.

Li-Ti found her grandmother waiting for her in the garden. Such a beautiful garden filled with sweet-scented flowers and shrubs!

The little girl greeted her grandmother in the way her mother had taught her before she left home, for a Chinese grandmother must be treated with the utmost respect. Li-Ti kept her eyes lowered for some time after she had made her bow, for she felt very shy. Soon, however, she found herself answering questions about her parents and her journey and when, at last, she ventured to look up at her grandmother, she gazed into eyes that smiled at her as kindly as her mother's.

After that Li-Ti knew she was going to be happy, although for a time everything seemed strange to her. The courtyard life of a Chinese lady is so different from that of a little girl brought up in a modern city like Shanghai, where the busy streets are filled with men and women whose conversation and dress resemble that of the people of the Western world.

In her grandmother's home, Li-Ti felt like a different person. Each morning when the amah awakened her, instead of hurrying to school she went around the house with her grandmother, who had a number of duties demanding attention. There were so many servants to be given their daily tasks.

BARE-LEGGED PEASANT CHILDREN

Outside the gates, villagers waited with their fruit and vegetables ready to sell. When they were admitted to the compound, Li-Ti's grandmother was often called upon to settle some dispute and to give advice where it was needed. And while this was going on Li-Ti enjoyed talking to the children. She could not always understand what they said, for they talked in a dialect that was strange to her, but she would save sweetmeats for them and have pleasure in watching the eagerness with which her gifts were accepted by these little bare-legged peasant children.

When her household was in order, Grandmother would take Li-Ti from one room to another and show her the beautiful scrolls and embroideries that hung upon the walls. She would open the doors of a lacquered cabinet and let Li-Ti peep at the many treasures within—little figures carved out of ivory and jade, painted fans and jeweled ornaments.

But, best of all, the little girl enjoyed the hours when she sat upon the stone-flagged terrace, for as her fingers worked upon some dainty piece of embroidery, Li-Ti's grandmother would tell her stories of old China. Stories of kings and emperors who ruled the people in the days of long ago. Stories of strange things that happened in a time so far back that no one can say when it was. Stories of the building of the Great Wall.

As she listened Li-Ti watched the mist creep up above the rice fields and soon little puffs of smoke, circling up from the cottages on the hillside, showed that men and women had gone home from their work in the fields and were preparing for their evening meal.—*Christian Science Monitor.*

MY MOTHER

I KNOW a dear old lady
Whose voice is soft and low;
Her face is like some picture,
A dream of long ago.

She is not great or famous,
Nor known in realms of art,
But she is rich in treasures
Which gild a kindly heart.

To see her is to bless her—
Her praise is on each tongue:
She was friend to all the aged,
And lover to the young.

She is a living sermon
Of hope and gentle facts—
A text for human nature,
That's found in loving acts!

She fills her world with kindness,
It brightens every spot.
She loves her earthly sorrows,
But yet of earth is not.

She is patient, pure and happy
In these her twilight days;
Her lips are ever ready
To comfort or to praise.

Her soul's a gleam of sunshine,
A rainbow of life's showers;
Her presence is a garden
Of every blooming flower

Which time can never wither,
For recollections rare
Shall bloom around her memory
And twine Love's garlands there.

—*William Lawrence Chittenden.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

ITS PURPOSE

To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, through the exchange of letters and by gifts of books and magazines.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To give to those living far from church some of the helps which churches give. One good sermon or similar article is printed in each number. These sermons are never doctrinal, but present only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed on by all churches.

WHERE TO WRITE

1. *Letters paying for subscriptions to the paper*, fifty cents a year, should be sent to the Cheerful Letter Exchange, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks or postal orders should be made payable to the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

2. *Letters asking for correspondents* should be sent to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

3. *Letters asking for books, magazines, cards, etc.*, also letters offering to give books and magazines, should be sent to Mrs. Henry R. Austin, 100 Elm Ave., Wollaston, Mass.

4. *Letters asking for help in studying at home* should be sent to Mrs. George O. Sands, Brimble Ave., North Beverly, Mass.

The Home Study Committee has on hand a variety of schoolbooks which may be used by students either at home or in the schoolroom. The aim of the teachers is to help in any study where help is needed. Often this may fit a person for a higher grade of work.

5. *Letters about the establishment of Circulating Libraries* should be sent to Mrs. H. A. Stevens, 26 John St., Brookline, Mass.

A Circulating Library will be started in any small community needing one, if proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references can be given. One hundred and fifty-nine libraries are now on our lists.

6. The Secretary of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Miss Ethel L. Hersey, Hingham, Mass., should receive the more general correspondence from workers on the local committees, or from others interested in the organization and its methods.

RUMFORD PRESS
CONCORD